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# Creating a new future

The job-loss workbook



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# INTRODUCTION

Many reports tell us that Canada climbed out of recession in 1991, yet there are still 1.5 million unemployed Canadians today. Facing global competition, automation, and constant change, organizations have been forced to restructure, down-size, merge, or in many cases, close down operations altogether.

Daily we hear of hundreds, (on a bad day, thousands), of fellow Canadians being laid off. Job security as such, has become a thing of the past, as blue collar workers join white collar managers and professionals in the growing ranks of the unemployed. And those who survived the last round of layoffs live in a constant state of fear that they may not be so lucky in the next round of cuts.

While it may sound frightening, the reality is that the unemployment we are experiencing now as Canadians is a part of a world-wide economic restructuring - and we're not likely to see a drastic improvement for some time.

So what can be done? Well, as individuals we may not have the power to change the economic cycle of this country, but we do have the ability to control the way we respond to the current situation, and the decisions we make about our futures.

This workbook is dedicated to all those people who face the challenge of creating a new future for themselves.

## Today's Economy and its Effects

## About this Workbook

This workbook was developed to act as a resource for individuals who have been laid off. It provides information on the issues that commonly arise such as evaluating severance packages, applying for unemployment insurance, and dealing with the physical and emotional changes that occur for the laid-off worker. It attempts to ease the transition from being gainfully employed to being unemployed. Activities and follow-up information are provided for the readers to i) assess their situations, ii) make effective decisions, iii) set goals and iv) develop action plans. The focus in this publication will be on the steps an individual takes following job loss.

This workbook is not a guide to resume writing or job search. In fact, it has been developed with the premise that job search is only one of many options available to the laid-off worker. Other options are outlined and a comprehensive list of reading and reference material is included to guide the readers to more detailed information about these options.

For this publication a number of Canadians were interviewed about their personal experiences in dealing with lay-offs. Examples of the ways they handled their experiences, failures, successes and the results are included. Statements reflecting their thoughts and feelings are sprinkled throughout the workbook. The stories of five individuals who made different choices for themselves will offer you insights into the ways that others have turned their crises into opportunities.

## Needs Assessment

Before going any further, it may be useful to assess your present situation and determine what your needs are. The activity on the following page will assist you in this task and direct you to the sections of the workbook that are most relevant to you.



# Needs Assessment

Place a check mark beside each of the activities you have completed to date.

## Attending to the Basics

- ☐ Have obtained professional advice regarding separation agreement/severance
- ☐ Have obtained sound financial advice regarding severance payment, RRSPs', tax implications, etc.
- ☐ Have filed claim for UIC
- ☐ Have met with banker
- ☐ Have developed interim budget
- ☐ Have negotiated a continuation of benefits (health care, dental plan etc.)
- ☐ Have obtained letters of reference from former employer
- ☐ Have obtained a signed separation agreement

## Dealing with the Impact of Loss

- ☐ Have examined the impact of the loss on me emotionally
- ☐ Have examined the impact of the loss on me physically
- ☐ Have identified ways that the loss has affected my behavior
- ☐ Have replaced self-defeating behaviors with self-affirming behaviors
- ☐ Have examined the impact of the loss on my family
- ☐ Have established effective coping techniques

## Accessing Resources

Have accessed resources regarding the following:

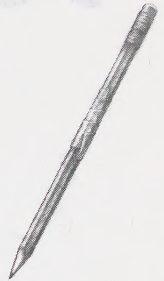
- ☐ job loss
- ☐ career exploration/planning
- ☐ job search/resume writing
- ☐ interview skills
- ☐ returning to school
- ☐ entrepreneurship

## Developing a Support Network

- ☐ Have identified family and friends who are supportive
- ☐ Have asked for support
- ☐ Have identified ways to support myself
- ☐ Have identified and accessed community and public support services

## Moving on

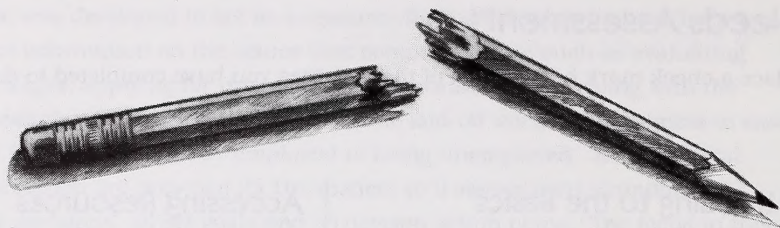
- ☐ Have explored all available options such as an occupational change, entrepreneurship etc.
- ☐ Have identified potential barriers to success
- ☐ Have developed plans to overcome potential barriers
- ☐ Have decided which option(s) I will pursue
- ☐ Have established short-term and long-term goals for myself
- ☐ Have developed a plan of action



1. Examine all the statements in which you DID NOT place a check mark.
2. Place these statements in order of priority to you by numbering them as 1, 2, 3 etc.
3. Proceed to the section(s) of the workbook that deals with these areas and issues.

# 1

# Job Loss



## Factors that Influence your Reaction to the Lay-off:

Job loss is a very stressful event that causes a wide variety of reactions and changes in the people who experience it. A number of factors may have influenced the way you reacted to your lay-off. These include the following:

- The circumstances of the lay-off
- Your personal situation and characteristics
- Future prospects

## Circumstances of the Lay-off



The manner in which you learned of your lay-off may have had an impact on your initial reaction and your period of adjustment. For instance, your reaction if you were prepared, may be vastly different from your reaction if you had received no advance warning. Other circumstances that may have affected your reaction include how the company treated you: Did they offer you support, including a severance package and outplacement services? Did they provide you with a period of transition, or move you off the premises immediately following the lay-off notification? Let's look at each of these scenarios a little more closely.

## No Advance Warning

If you had received no indication of possible lay-offs, or were confident that your position was secure despite lay-offs in other areas, your reaction may have been one of disbelief and shock.

"The company was suffering financially, but up until then they hadn't laid off any professional staff. I was the first one. I was in a state of total shock...actually when I think back, I was so upset that day that I shouldn't have even driven home...."

Stephanie, 37, pharmacist

Other possible reactions include anger, panic, and denial. These responses are normal. If you are experiencing any of these reactions allow yourself to take some time to work through these emotions before making any important decisions, or



taking any actions that may be the source of regret later. Your period of adjustment may be somewhat longer than it would be for someone who had time to prepare him/herself for the lay-off.

## Rumours of Possible Lay-offs

It is not uncommon these days for word to get out long before action occurs with regard to shutdowns, mergers and downsizing. Whether the rumours are based on facts or simply unfounded, you may have been on an emotional roller coaster ride long before you were actually laid off. Uncertainty, fear and anger are just some of the changing emotions you may have experienced if you were in this position.

For some, the rumours may have served as somewhat of a cushion and the opportunity to have prepared oneself mentally, emotionally and financially.

"Because it had always been in the back of my mind as a possibility, I really wasn't shocked. So, when the department head called me in I knew what to expect."

Gary, 34, civil technologist

Rumours may have also provided you with the incentive to start looking for another job or to consider making a career change. On the other hand, you may be feeling very bitter if you disregarded the rumours and did not prepare for the lay-off.

## Company Informs Employees that Lay-offs will Occur

Many organizations have taken to informing their employees as much as a year in advance that X number of employees will be laid off. In some cases, employees have been given the opportunity to take a voluntary separation package prior to the forced lay-offs. If this was true in your case you may have reacted more favourably, having had the opportunity to take some control over an unpleasant situation.

"I took the package. It gave me the opportunity to do something I had been wanting to do for a long time."

Terry, 36, counsellor

If you had made the choice not to take the voluntary package, or if you were not given the option, perhaps the advance notice helped you prepare for the lay-off in some way.

"I guess I still never thought it would happen to me, you know, it's always the next guy..., but when it did happen I can't say I was totally shocked, because they told us it was coming."

Jerry, 39, labourer

"I had helped create the severance package so I knew how it worked. And I hadn't been with the company for very long, so I had a feeling I would be one of the ones laid off. It was actually a bit of a relief...not having to wait and wonder anymore."

Vivian, 44, secretary

## Manner in which the Company Treated You

In addition to the way the company chose to inform you of the lay-off, the way they treated you may also have had an impact on your reaction to the news. Interviewees responded more favourably when they felt they were treated with dignity and respect.

"I could tell it was really hard for her to tell me...she was caring and concerned about my reaction. I was upset, but I left the office laughing!"

Vivian, 44, secretary

In cases where the employers clearly stated to the employee that the lay-off was not due to personal or performance issues, the adjustment was easier for the employee.

## Support Services

The support services offered by employers may serve as somewhat of a buffer to the laid-off worker. These include severance packages, outplacement services, continuation of benefits, etc. If your former employer offered minimal or no support services you may have greater feelings of anxiety about your future, and be angry and bitter toward your former employer.

NOTE: See Accessing Support Services in this workbook.

## Period of Transition

Some employers offer employees the option to stay on the job for a predetermined period. Other employers provide no transition time, making the layoff effective immediately. Reaction to a period of transition varied amongst the interviewees.

"The letter said the position was no longer required and they told me I was going with the job. It was 2:30 in the afternoon and they hustled me right out the door. Except for myself and one other, all the others who were laid off were able to stay on the job for 90 days. I felt rejected. It was very upsetting"

Derek, 45, transportation  
planning engineer

"I was told I could not clean out my desk, in fact, he (the boss) went and got my purse. Initially I was insulted because I had handled security for the whole building. But then, if you look at it logically, I can see why they had to do it that way. I'm comfortable with the way it was handled."

Jean, late 40's, office supervisor



Employees receiving news of the lay-off tend to respond in one of three ways: as a victim, a survivor, or a navigator. A victim tends to feel powerless, even abused. A survivor brushes him/herself off and moves on. A navigator takes control of the situation, using it as an opportunity to chart a new course. The role each person adopts is largely determined by his/her personal characteristics and situation. You may wish to consider which role you are going to adopt. Below, a number of factors are discussed; including two powerful predictors of reactions to job loss: Financial Status and Attachment to the Job.

### Financial Status

The status of your finances plays a large part in the way you react to the lay-off. If you have very few financial commitments and a handsome severance package you will likely have fewer immediate concerns than the individual who has a heavy debt load and a modest (or non-existent) severance package. Another consideration here is whether you are the only (or primary) "breadwinner" in the family. It is not uncommon these days to find families where lay-offs have occurred for both wage earners, in which case, the results can be devastating.

"We both worked for the same company, so when the lay-offs hit, they really hit. We're looking into selling our house now" Barb, 40, cashier

### Attachment to the Job

If the job you've been laid off from was your "dream job", then the impact of the loss may be overwhelming. If you were truly committed to your work and had visions of advancement, then your reaction and adjustment period may be dramatically different than it would be for someone who was less committed to their work.

### Age

Lay-offs are not easy for any particular age group. If you are a young person, new to the workforce, you may be devastated, having lost a job you spent years preparing for. You may lack the experience necessary to be competitive in a tight job market. If you are 45 years old or older, you may be similarly affected, thinking that you can't compete with the younger worker who has more recent education/training and may accept a lower wage. You may also feel out of touch with the current labour market.

### Education/Training

Because the job market has become increasingly competitive, employers are able to select their candidates from pools of highly educated, skilled employees. Therefore, if your level of education does not make you a competitive candidate, the impact of the layoff will be different for you than it is for someone who has the educational back-

ground to support them in their attempts to return to the workforce. Having said that, it's important here not to jump to conclusions about what education is required in a particular field, but to thoroughly research this aspect. For instance, you may assume that a degree is always preferred over a certificate or diploma, but this is not always the case. In some fields, employers are more eager to hire an individual with more practical training or schooling obtained through a technical school or college, rather than the more academic background offered through many university programs.

## Skill Transferability

If your skills are highly specialized in an industry experiencing vast cutbacks, you may find yourself faced with some hard decisions:

- relocating to an area where your skills are still in demand
- offering your services as a consultant
- reviewing your skills that are transferable to other areas.

## Support Systems

The level of support you have from family, friends and former colleagues will most certainly play a role in how well you adjust to the lay-off. The tremendous benefits provided by a strong support system are discussed later in this workbook.

## Previous Job Losses

The news of a lay-off may affect you differently the second or third time you experience it. That is not to say it will make it easier, but some report that knowing what to expect, and having survived it before, may ease the initial blow.

"I was at the bottom of the pole. I felt no resentment. I just figured I'd get back on the horse again and start looking."

Gary, 34, civil technologist

If you find yourself experiencing repeated lay-offs, it may be time to consider whether something you are doing is a contributing factor. Ask your former employers for feedback on your past performance and suggestions on how you can make yourself more competitive in the field. Chances are your lay-offs were not linked to performance issues. It may simply be time for you to consider a new occupation, one in which there is more demand for workers.



## Personal Characteristics

There are a number of personal variables that will also have an impact on your reaction to the job loss. These include your attitude, your physical, mental and emotional well-being, your ability to problem-solve, and your coping mechanisms. As you work through this manual, it may be useful for you to examine your personal characteristics, and consider how they are helping or hindering your progress with regard to the lay-off.

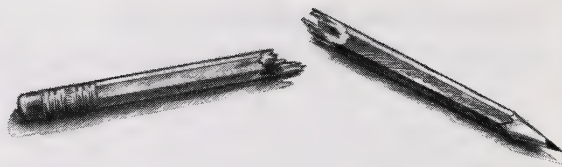
One final factor that may contribute to the way you respond to the lay-off is your perception of your future prospects. If you, like so many others, are of the belief that there are no jobs out there, your reaction may be one of devastation. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between what's real versus what's perceived. It may be difficult to be optimistic at a time when lay-offs are abounding and the media has little else to focus on, but take heart; there are opportunities out there. There's no denying that the prospects in some occupational fields, and in some demographic areas are grim, but the key here is to search for and find the opportunities that do exist. If you require assistance in this area, resource materials and support services are outlined later in this workbook.

*" At the time, I thought it was the worst thing that could ever happen to me. But, you know, it really turned out to be a blessing in disguise. "*

*Mary, 46, director of sales*

## Future Prospects

# Attending to the Basics



There are a number of issues that need to be dealt with promptly following your lay-off.

- Assessing/Negotiating your Severance or Settlement Offer
- Applying for Unemployment Insurance
- Financial Planning
- Accessing Other Supports and Services

Immediately following the lay-off, you may feel ill-prepared to make decisions regarding your needs and those of your family, but often the situation dictates that these issues be addressed within a period of a week to a month. Because of the potential that you are experiencing a shock reaction, it is advisable to avoid making sudden decisions on your own. Rather, ask someone you trust who can be objective and level-headed, to assist you through this stage, to give you feedback and support.

Some considerations with regard to each of these issues are outlined below.

## Assessing/ Negotiating your Severance Package



If you were in a permanent position with the organization prior to your lay-off, chances are you were presented a severance or settlement package during your exit interview. In some cases, employers urge their laid off staff to sign a document agreeing to the package immediately. It is essential to take some time to consider the offer before making a decision to accept it. Do not sign anything yet. Get some input from someone who is knowledgeable in this area to ensure that you are getting the best deal possible.

"I told them I wouldn't sign anything yet; I had to take it home and read it. Well it was a standard package according to the Labour Standards Act, but I talked to a lawyer who said it wasn't a good deal in my case. So, I decided to pursue legal action, but before we made it to court, the President of the company met with me and we negotiated a better deal." Gary, 34, estimator

Some tips for assessing your package have been outlined on the following page.



NOTE: If the company you worked for is closing and declaring bankruptcy, a trustee of bankruptcy will be appointed. Contact the trustee to investigate a settlement.

## Some Considerations for Assessing Your Severance Offer

1. Does the package presented to you meet the minimum requirements as laid out by the Alberta Employment Standards Code?  
Their criteria states that you are entitled to receive from 1 to 8 weeks notice of termination; length of notice is dependent on length of service with the company. Your employer has the option to pay wages in lieu of written notice. The employer also has the option of providing a combination of written notice and wages. NOTE: Employment standards vary from province to province. Contact the local Labour Standards office in your province for details. If you require assistance in determining whether your package is a fair deal, contact the Labour Standards office or seek professional advice from a lawyer who is experienced in the area of lay-offs. Some things to consider before seeking out the services of a lawyer to pursue litigation:
  - Will the cost of a lawyer outweigh the potential benefit of an increased settlement?
  - Is litigation necessary to obtain a more satisfactory settlement, or is it possible to settle amicably?
  - Will pursuing legal action against my former company have a detrimental effect on my career? (i.e. future employment opportunities in related fields).
2. Does the package offer a continuation of your benefits for the duration of the severance period?  
If not, attempt to negotiate it (if these are not covered already by a spouse's plan). This includes any medical, dental, and/or insurance coverage paid for by the company during your employment. If negotiations are not looking favorable, you may wish to consider offering to pay part or all of the premiums yourself, so that you can still take advantage of the group rate that you wouldn't qualify for as an individual.
3. What are the payout options?  
Are you being offered a lump sum, bi-weekly installments, or are you being maintained on record as a salaried employee for a pre-determined term? How will this affect your taxable income? (See Financial Planning)
4. Have outplacement services been offered as part of the package?  
While these services are not mandatory for the employer to include, many recognize their value and willingly provide them to their laid off employees. Find out exactly what your company is providing you with and ensure you get the best deal possible. Seek more than resume writing services. Effective outplacement services include supportive individualized counselling and

## Applying for Unemployment Insurance

group workshops in the following areas: coping with the lay-off, career exploration, decision making, goal-setting, effective job search skills, networking, resume writing, interview techniques and financial planning. In some cases outplacement agencies provide office space, support staff, telephone answering services and special interest workshops (e.g. Exploring Entrepreneurship). If your former employer is not willing to purchase outplacement services for you, try to negotiate an increase in your severance moneys, so that you may purchase these services on your own. A formula that some organizations have used to calculate the amount of outplacement services required is:

For every \$10,000. the employee earned, one month of outplacement counselling is recommended, (e.g. Bob earns \$60,000. per annum = 6 months outplacement services) While 6 months of outplacement services is a generous package, the minimum you should request is 2 days of individual and group sessions, with feedback on your resume, job search techniques and coping strategies.

5. Have you been provided with letters of recommendation?  
If not, request that they be provided for you.

Once all the terms of the agreement have been satisfactorily addressed, get them in writing. Ensure you get a signed document with all of the terms and conditions clearly laid out.

File a claim for Unemployment Insurance immediately. It is expected that you file immediately upon becoming unemployed, regardless of whether you qualify for payments at the time. Your severance will have an impact on your insurability, but you must be assessed by an insurance agent immediately following your lay-off. Even if you do not qualify for payments initially, once you have an active claim you are entitled to access other services.

### Tips About Unemployment Insurance

1. Apply immediately at your nearest Canada Employment Centre: Contrary to popular belief, it is not necessary to have your Record Of Employment at the time you initiate your claim. If you choose to wait for it, your claim will not be active until the week you file.
2. If you are unsure about whether you qualify for unemployment insurance, apply anyway. The insurance officer will assess your eligibility and advise you accordingly.



3. Ask questions (How can I ensure my eligibility? What do I need to do? What services are available to me through the Canada Employment Centre?)
4. Take advantage of the various services offered to you free of charge at the Canada Employment Centre. As soon as you have an active claim, you are eligible to access these programs, (even if you are not yet eligible to receive payments). Make a point of getting to know what is available to you early in your unemployment so that you can access them as soon as you feel ready for them. Some of the services available through your Canada Employment Centre office include:
  - One-to-One Employment Counselling
  - Group Information Sessions
  - Workshops, (may include Career Planning, Job Search Tools and Techniques, etc.)
  - Information regarding Job Finding Clubs in your area, Support programs, Training/Upgrading etc.

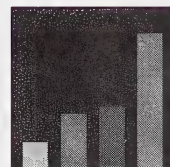
**NOTE:** Services vary between centres.

It is essential that you seek out the advice of experts in the area of financial planning. Most immediately you'll need to consider how to best handle your severance moneys (if applicable), whether to put it directly into Registered Retirement Savings Plans, a savings account or other investment alternatives. There are a number of tax implications you need to be aware of in order to make the best choice for you. Make sure to discuss these with your advisor. You may also wish to consider contacting Revenue Canada for the most current information regarding taxation. Other financial planning considerations include your insurance and retirement needs and your long term financial goals. You may need to shop around for the right person to assist you, but the time it takes will be well worth your efforts. Sometimes organizations bring financial consultants in to talk to people being laid off. And don't forget to look for current financial information in your library and bookstores.

### Tips for Financial Planning

1. Find someone who is able to explain financial matters to you in plain language. (Check your telephone listings or ask friends to recommend someone)
2. Work with someone you feel you can trust.
3. Ensure this person is working for you, making every effort to get the best deal for you, (not attempting to steer you to high commission deals for him/herself).

## Financial Planning



4. Find out up front what you will be charged, for the services of the financial advisor.
5. Talk to your banker. Meet with him/her to discuss your financial status. This may include discussions regarding possible debt consolidation loans, reduced mortgage payments, and/or retirement savings plans and investments.
6. Prepare an interim budget and stick to it. This will likely require a review of your spending habits and a commitment to 'trim the fat' and put away the credit cards.

## Accessing Other Supports and Services

### Supports for Independence

If you find yourself in a situation where you do not qualify for a severance package or Unemployment Insurance and you have no other resources (investments, savings, family support), you may need to consider making application for Social Assistance (now termed Supports For Independence (S.F.I. in Alberta). S.F.I. is a program delivered through the Department of Family and Social Services that assists Albertans who are in financial need. It is intended to be an interim step for individuals in need, providing them with money necessary to meet their basic needs for a short period of time while they seek alternative means of support.

### Other Supports

By talking to your local Canada Employment Centre, Alberta Career Development Centre, or Alberta Family and Social Services Office, you may learn of numerous other supports available in your community.

Several such support services are discussed further in the Developing A Support Network section of this workbook.





# Dealing with the Impact of Job Loss

# 3

Anyone who has experienced a lay-off can attest to the fact that the loss of a position and the income it provided is only the tip of the iceberg. There is so much more involved.

*"It wasn't just a case of losing an income; I lost my sense of direction and future plans. My family was totally disrupted; it was like my life was put on hold."*

*Anna, 39, manager*

In section two of this manual, we discussed some of the factors that influence the way people initially react to a lay-off. In this section we'll examine the actual impacts of job loss in terms of:

- the meaning of work and the changes that occur,
- the emotional, physical, and behavioral impacts on the individuals, and
- strategies for coping with the loss.

First, let's examine the satisfactions of working or the meaning you derive from work.

When individuals experience an involuntary job loss, the sudden loss effectively strips away all the value the workplace represented to that individual. If you haven't already started to assess the impact of having lost your job, it may be useful to explore exactly what work means to you. By identifying what work means to you, you'll be better prepared to understand and accept the reactions and feelings you may encounter in relation to the loss. (Your spouse or "significant other" may also wish to assess the meaning of his/her work in order to better understand what you are experiencing).

Complete the exercises on the following two pages.

## The Meaning of Work

## Activity: Work - the Rewards

### Instructions

The following is a list of rewards that work potentially provides.

1. Place a check mark ✓ beside the items which represent rewards you seek through your work. You may wish to add any rewards that you seek that are not listed.
2. Put in order of importance the rewards marked with a check mark, using numbers. For example, 1 being the most important to you, 2 the next most important and so on.

Example: ✓ 2 financial success



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> financial success  | <input type="checkbox"/> time structure                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> basic necessities  | <input type="checkbox"/> achievement                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sense of purpose   | <input type="checkbox"/> sense of belonging               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> recognition        | <input type="checkbox"/> intrinsic pleasure               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> status             | <input type="checkbox"/> identity                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> authority          | <input type="checkbox"/> prestige                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> social interaction | <input type="checkbox"/> opportunity for self-fulfillment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> personal growth    | <input type="checkbox"/> self-esteem                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> challenge          | <input type="checkbox"/> adventure                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/>                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/>                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/>                                  |



Putting it in Perspective

Carefully consider the job you recently were laid off from. Place the rewards you identified as priorities on the previous page in the column below that best describes whether that reward was being fulfilled in that job.

(e.g. If recognition = #1 priority, but was rarely or never met on the job, place the word Recognition in the third column).

Always Met, Sometimes Exceeded	Sometimes Met	Rarely Or Never Met



Examine the results of the last two exercises you've completed. Based on the rewards you seek through work, would you agree that work means more than just an income? Most would agree. Work is a significant life event that holds a great deal of meaning, and potentially provides the worker with a means to satisfy many needs, wishes and drives. Even in situations where people were dissatisfied with their jobs, they often missed it when it was gone, because of some of the rewards it provided.

## Changes that Occur

Now that you have examined what work means to you, let's look at the elements of change that you and others like you who have been laid off may experience.

### Loss of Income

Perhaps the most obvious, this change can indeed have a devastating effect. Depending on your financial position, and the resources available to you (such as severance packages), a loss of income may represent a temporary set-back or, in more extreme cases, may cause a complete change in lifestyle.

" We have two little ones and my wife has only a part-time job, so we're fixing up the house to sell it. "

Neil, 31, construction worker

" I had no other choice but to file for personal bankruptcy. "

Terry, 35, security guard

" I put most of my severance into R.R.S.P.'s to take advantage of tax breaks, so I did have to dip into my savings somewhat. "

Stephanie, 37, pharmacist

The individuals who find themselves in desperate financial situations, are often the same people who rush into finding a replacement job, only to discover that the new job represents significant cuts in income (that may last for years), and that the new job meets very few of their other needs.

**TIP:** Meet with your banker and/or financial advisor. Develop an interim budget that affords you the opportunity to take the time to make the best choices for you based on the realities of your situation. Avoid rushing into something you may regret later.

### Changes In Relationships

The sudden loss of a job inevitably means changes in your relationships. For you, this may mean severing relationships with some people, increasing the amount of time spent with others, and/or developing new relationships. These changes include your personal, business and, in some cases, social contacts. Let's start by discussing the changes you're most likely to notice first, your business contacts.

### Business Contacts

The most immediate change you will notice is the loss of daily contact with your former co-workers. This may mean the time you spent with them conducting business, or the time shared with them over coffee and lunch. If you were involved in the company's social or recreational planning committee, it may represent an even greater loss.



"I was the coordinator of the rec. committee, and had organized a team for the Jasper-Banff relay before I left. As it turns out, even though I was laid off, I still crossed the finish line for the company. I don't see my co-workers much now. I'm the skeleton re-emerging from the grave. It rubs it in for them. They think they may be next.

Derek, 45, transportation  
planning engineer

In many situations where an employee is given notice, the lay-off is effective immediately, meaning that there is little or no time afforded to the outplaced employee to say good-bye to his/her co-workers. This situation can leave the employee feeling isolated and shut out.

**TIP:** Make a point of contacting your former co-workers to explain what has occurred and say your good-byes. This also will help them adjust to your absence. Lay-offs often leave the "survivors" - those still on the job, with doubts and feelings of guilt, in addition to their fears that they may be next to be laid off.

"I called the people at work to tell them my side of the story and say 'good-bye'. I'm glad I did because it made them feel better to know I was okay. They felt guilty because they thought if anyone should go, it should be them, not me."

Nancy, 23, clerk

**TIP:** Decide whether you would like to maintain contact with some of your former co-workers. If you feel ongoing contact would be positive, by all means initiate it. If not, move on after you have said your farewells.

"I drop by work all the time and they make me feel really welcome. It's nice to see friendly faces."

Gary, 34, estimator

"I've seen some co-workers on the street and I could tell by their body language they didn't know if they should stop and say hello; so I do anyway, and then it's OK."

Vivian, 44, secretary

## Personal Relationships

When you have been laid off, it's important to be aware that, even though it has happened to you, the lay-off is also going to have a significant impact on those who are close to you. This includes your spouse or partner, your children, and others with whom you have a close bond (e.g. parents, siblings).

**Spouses/partners:** In many cases, spouses report that they are experiencing similar feelings and reactions as their partners. After all, they too are now faced with uncertainty about the future, and concerns about how the lay-off will impact the family.

" I was in shock at first. Then I got really mad. "

Jane, 35, wife of laid off employee

Some factors that may compound the situation for the spouse/partner include the following:

- A need to be supportive and caring, at a time when they too, are experiencing stress related to the worries created by the lay-off.
- A lack of control over many aspects of the situation (e.g. spouse's reaction, changes in behavior, loss of self-esteem, opportunities available).
- Absence of support and understanding for themselves. Close family and friends will often check out how the one who lost the job is doing, but fail to realize the impact on the spouse/partner.

**TIP:** Discuss your feelings openly with your spouse, and encourage your spouse to do the same. Your instinct may be to protect your spouse/partner from the unpleasant realities but, in doing so, you only deny each of you the opportunity to support each other through tough times. That may eventually lead to resentment and arguments.

**TIP:** Set aside some time to spend together, focusing on enjoying each other's company. Avoid discussing the job loss at these times.

Sometimes individuals attempt to replace the control they feel they have lost by becoming overly critical of people and things around them. It is important to recognize if you have this tendency and take steps to avoid or correct it.

**TIP:** Be aware of how your behavior has changed and how it is affecting those around you. Replace any of the self-defeating or detrimental behaviors with more constructive ones.

**Children:** If you have children, it is essential to recognize the potential impact your job loss may have on them. Even the youngest children can sense tension experienced by their parents, and this can leave them feeling vulnerable, afraid, and worried that they are in some way responsible for the situation.

" I have two youngsters; my 13 year old seems more morose. "

Derek, 45, transportation  
planning engineer

**TIP:** Be conscious of your behavior in the presence of the children. If the children are old enough to understand, sit down with them and calmly explain the situation, and how it will affect them (e.g. they may have to accept a reduction in their allowances for a time).



**Other Close Personal Contacts:** Others who are close to you and care about you may also be impacted by your lay-off, but less directly. For instance, a parent or sibling may spend a considerable amount of time worrying about you and the impact the loss is having on you and your family. They might even adjust their schedules to spend more time with you, to support you through a tough time, offer advice, etc..

**TIP:** Let them know how you are doing, and be open with them about the kind of support you need from them. This may include asking them to give you "space". Thank them for their concern, listen with an open mind to their advice, and then make your own decisions based on gathering all the facts and what is best for you.

" Mom wanted to help and was always giving me advice. Only, she really wasn't on top of things, so I knew her advice was not the greatest. She meant well. "  
Candice, 33, cashier

" I intentionally didn't tell any family member other than my wife. I didn't want to burden them or have them interfere. "  
Brian, 43, personnel manager

## Social Contacts

Depending on the relationship you have with different people outside of work and family, you may experience a variety of reactions from them when they learn of your job loss.

" Most of our friends behaved as usual, asking how it was going from time to time. But there was one who completely withdrew from the friendship; it was like I had a disease. "  
Anna, 39, manager

" You sure find out who your friends are; they're the ones who stick by you. "  
Kelly, 44 sales consultant

It used to be thought that there was a connection between being unemployed and one or more negative characteristics, such as a poor work ethic, low education, low skill level, etc. Today, many outstanding employees, with outstanding employment records, are among the unemployed. Your social contacts who have made themselves scarce since your lay-off may be unaware of this fact, and may have attached a stigma to being unemployed.

It could also be that your absent friend has no idea how to approach you and is feeling awkward. In any case, it's up to you how you want to proceed. You may wish to contact that person and explain the situation, and then let him/her make the next move; or you may wish to tell that person how his/her absence has made you feel. You may choose to just let it be, and leave it up to them to initiate contact.

**TIP:** When interacting with your friends and acquaintances, let them know how you're doing without making your situation the main focus of every contact you make. This way you'll avoid constantly bringing them down and burning them out. Also, continue to rejoice with them for the positive occurrences in their lives. 'Misery may love company, but no one enjoys a wet blanket!'

## Change in the Sense of Belonging and Purpose

For many, work provides a place to go, where people know you and welcome you as a member of the team; one who, like them, serves a purpose within the organization. For some, losing this sense of belonging and purpose can be a devastating blow.

"I don't know what I'll do with myself. I'll probably sleep my time away, because there's no reason for me to get up. Nobody would even know if I died in my sleep."

Jennifer, 30, office assistant

**TIP:** Create reasons to get up, make plans to meet a supportive friend for breakfast, do volunteer work, join a support group or job finding club, or get involved with a hobby. Do this early in your unemployment. The longer you wait and allow feelings of isolation and lack of purpose to set in, the harder it will be to get back into the flow.

## Change in Routine/Structure

After several years of establishing and adhering to the same routine, you may find it surprising after a week or two of not being bound by a routine and being a slave to an alarm clock, that you actually miss the structure work provided. Humans are creatures of habit, and most function much more effectively when there is a certain degree of predictability to their lives.

"It was great to sleep in for the first week, but after that I found myself waking up early, and envying the people who had to go to work."

Mike, 41, loading dock manager

**TIP:** Develop a new routine which takes you out of the house if possible. Getting "out there" regularly will have a positive impact on your self-esteem and may have some other positive effects, such as keeping you aware of what's going on in the community, developing new contacts, etc..

## Change of Status

Whether the job you lost was an upper-management position or an entry-level position, you, and possibly some of the people around you, will perceive you as having a change in status. The effects of this may not be apparent until you meet someone



new at a gathering and they inquire, "So, what do you do?" Or your friends neglect to invite you to join them for the annual fundraising dinner at \$100 a plate, because "you're unemployed now." Whether real or imagined, the impact of this could deal a huge blow to your self-esteem.

**TIP:** Hold your head high. Remember, these widespread lay-offs are a result of our country's economic climate, and the loss of your job does not mean that you are a different person with lesser value and skills. Though your situation has changed, the position you have earned in the community need not (e.g. if you have always contributed handsomely to some community organization, and are not currently in a position to donate money, offer your time or specialized skills).

**TIP:** When dealing with inquiries from new acquaintances, don't feel obligated to share your whole story. Perhaps try saying "I'm a carpenter", rather than "I'm unemployed".

## Loss of Recognition

For many, their only source of recognition is the work environment. This may take the shape of formal recognition, such as awards and/or performance appraisals, or it could be informal recognition provided within the work setting, such as occasional words of praise from co-workers and/or management (e.g. "Great idea you had for the company newsletter!").

**TIP:** Consider the kind and amount of recognition you require, and find another means of getting it. This may mean involving yourself in volunteer work such as participation on a Board of Directors, taking a course where you may get recognition for your academic achievements, or seeking recognition closer to home for contributions there.

## Loss of Benefits

Often benefits are taken for granted until they're gone. Depending on your situation, losing the benefits such as dental, medical, life insurance, and others may represent a huge financial burden. On the other hand, it may simply cause some anxiety because of the sense it creates that you're not covered, should you need the protection.

**TIP:** Attempt to negotiate a continuation of benefits as part of your severance. Failing that, offer to pay the premiums for coverage to your employer so that you may still qualify for the group rates. If you are unsuccessful with both, look into the possibility of setting up your own coverage plans. There are institutions that offer plans to companies with as few as one employee. It may be worth exploring.

## Future Plans

The future may seem very uncertain when you've been laid-off, especially if you see the same thing happening to others all around. Generally, people who are unemployed will more readily accept the news that work is scarce than someone who is working. The fact is, people base their beliefs on what they know to be true based on their experiences, and what they are told by sources they trust. So, if you had been inundated with news of doom and gloom prior to experiencing a lay-off, you may be more likely to believe that the future is grim. This belief has the dangerous potential to become a self-fulfilling prophecy, (if you believe it to be true, you may make it reality).

**TIP:** Examine your future plans carefully. Consider your motivation for developing your plans the way you have. Were they realistic before the lay-off? Are they realistic now?

If not, what adjustments need to be made to achieve your goals? What barriers can you anticipate, and how can you overcome them? Are you still committed to these plans?

If so, make a commitment to yourself to find a way to achieve those plans, despite the setback of the lay-off. If not, develop a new plan.

**TIP:** Read the case studies in this manual! These people who thought their lives were over because of the lay-off, discovered brighter futures following their lay-off - in spite of today's economy!

Now that you have examined the rewards you seek from work, and the changes that typically occur for the newly unemployed, let's focus on the reactions lay-offs stimulate.

## Grieving the Loss

For some, it has been said that losing a job is like experiencing the loss of a loved one. If your lay-off was a painful loss, allow yourself a grieving period. The reason this is recommended is that the grieving process is also a healing process. Even in many cases where individuals have had some level of dissatisfaction with their jobs, the reactions they described were characteristic of the grieving stages encountered following a death. Although not everyone reacts to the job loss in this manner, it may be useful to be aware of the different stages that many people experience in this regard.

"At first I was in shock, and then I guess I just became really angry and I stayed angry for quite a while. Then I was really down, I withdrew and became depressed. And then finally I decided I had to get on with my life, and I started to feel better once I started to get out there looking."

Stephanie, 37, pharmacist

## Potential Reactions to the Loss



Stephanie's comments illustrate the stages of grieving that many who have experienced job loss report encountering. The stages can be described as follows:

1. Shock/Denial - You may feel numbed and overwhelmed by the news. It may take some time for the news to sink in. Denial may follow as you progress beyond shock but may not fully accept the news.
2. Anger - During this stressful time you may direct anger toward your former employer or lash out at friends and family. You may feel like you are not in complete control of things.
3. Depression/Withdrawal - The reality of the situation may start to sink in and the depression you experience may be like a period of mourning. Feelings of inadequacy may set in and you may withdraw from those around you.
4. Acceptance - You come to terms with the loss and prepare to move on.

NOTE: Not everyone responds in this manner. You may experience some of the reactions listed but in a different order, or you may encounter entirely different reactions, such as illustrated below:

"I was actually relieved. This was like the break I'd been waiting for. If they hadn't forced me out, I never would have made the move I'd been considering for so long. I was grateful."

Judy, 44, supervisor

Regardless of the nature of your reactions, it is important that you stay in touch with what you are experiencing. This will help you understand yourself better, and may help you identify your needs.

Consider your reactions in terms of the following four components:

- Behavior Changes
- Physical Reactions
- Cognitive Responses (The effects on your mind)
- Emotional Reactions

## Behavior Changes


Stress, crisis, or change can cause a person to behave in a manner different from what would be considered "normal" for that person. Job loss is no exception. The changes in behavior may range from moderate to extreme, and in some cases, may warrant serious consideration.

Turn to the next page and complete only Part 1 of the questionnaire with regard to your behavioral reaction to your job loss.

## Activity: Behavior Changes

### Part 1

Place a check mark ✓ beside the statement(s) that describe behaviors you are engaging in.

- 
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> withdrawing from social contact          | <input type="checkbox"/> being excessively stubborn   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> watching excessive amounts of T.V.       | <input type="checkbox"/> being cynical, negative, antagonistic                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> staying home, avoiding going out         | <input type="checkbox"/> alienating yourself - "nobody cares "                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> experiencing changes in sleeping pattern | <input type="checkbox"/> avoiding talking   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> experiencing changes in eating habits    | <input type="checkbox"/> reduced sex drive  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> failing to contribute at home            | <input type="checkbox"/> loss of intimacy   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> being short tempered, irritable          | <input type="checkbox"/> excessive drinking   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> having moods swings, emotional outbursts | <input type="checkbox"/> excessive smoking  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> worrying excessively                     | <input type="checkbox"/> excessive use of prescription drugs                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blaming                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> using illegal substances   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> experiencing crying spells               | <input type="checkbox"/> being more accident prone  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> arguing with others                      | <input type="checkbox"/> engaging in high risk activities                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bossing others around                    | <input type="checkbox"/> driving carelessly   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> acting like a martyr, 'poor me' behavior | <input type="checkbox"/> abusing spouse, children, pets (mentally, emotionally, physically) |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> physical outbursts (hitting, kicking, etc.)                        |

NOTE: If you are engaging in any of the behaviors listed above in the right hand column, you may wish to consider seeking the support and guidance of a professional counsellor. See the Developing A Support Network section of this workbook for possible ways to locate the services you need.

After you have assessed your behavior changes, consider the impact of any self-defeating behaviors you are engaging in, and the impact of your behavior changes on those around you. Complete Part 2 of the activity on the following page.



## Part 2

Record the behaviors you checked off in Part 1 in the space below. For each behavior write a minimum of 2 positive behaviors you could replace the original behavior with.

Example #1: ✓ withdrawing from social contact

1. meet with a friend for coffee at least once a week
2. join a support group

Example #2: ✓ being cynical, negative

1. listen sincerely to others' points of view
2. find at least one positive in each situation



## Physical Reactions

Some of the physical reactions people experience when laid-off have been listed below. Circle the physical effects your lay-off is having on you.

headaches	diarrhea	colds/flu
tension	constipation	stomach aches
fatigue	hemorrhoids	cramps
insomnia	dry mouth	stomach gas
weight change	profuse sweating	impotence
body/muscle aches	rapid pulse	teeth grinding
high blood pressure	shallow breathing	skin rash
elevated cholesterol	frequent urination	fidgiting

While some of these merely represent a temporary inconvenience or discomfort, others can lead to more serious problems. Exercise, fresh air and relaxation techniques may help to relieve some of these physical reactions. Nevertheless, if you are experiencing ongoing physical reactions to your job loss, consider seeing your doctor to discuss your concerns and possible remedies.

## Cognitive Responses (The effects on your mind)

Changes to the way you think may occur during the time following your lay-off. Circle the words below that reflect a change in the way that you think.

confused	self-doubting	experiencing
pessimistic about the future	forgetful	- low self-esteem
judgmental	critical	- negative self-talk
self-blaming	apathetic	- negative attitude
distracted	closed minded	- negative memories

Just as some behaviors can be destructive, so can negative thoughts. If you have circled any of the words listed above, examine ways to replace those self-defeating thoughts with positive, productive ones. For example, if you are thinking, "I can't do this. How can I possibly start a business of my own, if I can't even keep a job?", replace that negative thought pattern with one or a combination of the following:

- A visual image of yourself achieving the success you are striving for.
- A list of four or five statements that you will succeed.
- A list of your personal strengths.
- A reminder of the accomplishments you've made in the past.
- Any other self-affirming statement or thought that helps to chase away the negative one!

There is true value to keeping positive thoughts running through your mind. Consider the psychology of a coach who encourages his team by telling them, "You can do it; you're the best...". If you believe, you can achieve.

## Emotional Reactions

Some of the feelings experienced by people who have lost their jobs have been described in terms of a grieving process. For many, their emotional responses include a wide range of emotions that come and go, intensify and diminish over time. Some liken these changing feelings to an emotional roller coaster. Some believe they have worked through all their feelings, only to have them re-emerge during their travels toward new goals.

Take a moment to consider the feelings you have experienced, by completing the activity on the next page.



## Activity: An Inventory of Your Feelings

afraid	depressed	helpless	responsible
alone	devastated	hopeless	restless
angry	disappointed	hostile	sad
annoyed	disturbed	indifferent	scared
anxious	ecstatic	isolated	shocked
apathetic	embarrassed	let down	spiteful
ashamed	enraged	listless	stunned
betrayed	envious	out of control	terrified
bothered	excited	overjoyed	unsure
challenged	furious	powerless	vengeful
confused	guilty	relieved	withdrawn
crazy	happy	resentful	worried

### Instructions

Using the inventory of words listed above, complete the following exercise. Feel free to add any words that describe feelings you've experienced that don't appear on the list.

1. Write a brief paragraph explaining how you felt immediately following the loss of your job. (Avoid the temptation to describe your thoughts. Focus on your feelings.)

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2. Describe the other feelings you've experienced in the weeks/months following the event.

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3. Describe how you are feeling now.

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## Dealing with the Impact

Once you have examined your various responses to the loss, it is useful to try putting everything into perspective and prepare yourself for what lies ahead. This can be accomplished through four tasks;

1. **Accept the reality of the situation.**

Once the shock has passed, allow yourself to see the situation for what it truly is, and accept the fact that you have been laid off, unpleasant as it may be, and despite the fact that you may be undeserving of such action.

2. **Experience the feelings that result from the loss.**

First of all, you are entitled to all of the feelings you experience. No one is in a position to tell you what you should or should not be feeling. Give yourself permission and time to work through your changing emotions. The key here is to avoid the urge to deny or ignore this important aspect of your response to the loss.

3. **Adjust to the new reality.**

When it comes to involuntary job loss, there are usually a number of factors that are beyond your control (such as the labour market and the economy). This lack of control can be very frustrating. Try to adjust to your situation by identifying the factors you can control (such as the actions you choose to take in response to your loss) and avoid the trap of dwelling on the things you are powerless to change.

4. **Re-invest your energy.**

Turn your efforts to positive activities that support you on the road to better things. This may mean engaging in a period of self-exploration, to assist you in deciding what direction to take in the future.

## Coping

Discovering ways to cope with your job loss is a necessary step to completing the healing process. For the individual who has been laid off, this must take place on two levels: personal and professional.

**Personal:** In order to regain a sense of control in your life, it will be important to activate a number of different coping strategies such as those listed below:

- **Set up a Support Network:-** See the Developing a Support Network section of the workbook.
- **Set some personal goals:** Give yourself something to strive for.
- **Keep active: Mind and body!** Nutrition and fitness are important to your well-being.
- **Redefine yourself outside work:** Engage in activities you enjoy, create a diversion.
- **Establish a routine:** Get up each day with a plan of action.
- **Increase your self-esteem:** Spend time on yourself. Do things that make you feel good about yourself.
- **Laugh and cry:** Both activities release endorphins and can be very therapeutic, so don't inhibit these responses.
- **Seek consultation:** Obtain professional help if you feel the need.

**Professional:** Before jumping into a job search, take time to consider whether a career change is in order.

- **Do some career planning:** Make some decisions about whether or not to make a career change. Take time to examine trends in the labour market.
- **Consider upgrading/retraining:** Use your time to develop yourself further.
- **Network:** Continue to develop your network.
- **Plan a daily agenda:** Set goals each day and maintain a record of your activities.
- **Develop a strategy.** This will vary depending on whether you are planning a new business or finding a new job. Pace yourself.



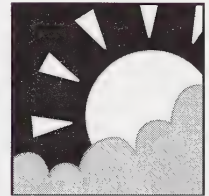
## Tips for Improving Your Coping Skills:

- 1) Accept responsibility for your life
- 2) Be objective
- 3) Know your inner resources
- 4) Take a positive approach
- 5) Be realistic and flexible
- 6) Recognize the danger signs
- 7) Don't attempt to cope alone
- 8) Take it one step at a time
- 9) Take control of your life

Thus far we've discussed mainly the unpleasant side of a lay-off, and ways to cope during the tough times. Let's take a moment to explore the flip-side of the coin, so to speak, the silver lining they say exists in each cloud.

Can you identify anything positive that has resulted from your lay-off? When asked this question, many interviewed people were able to easily identify the gains.


**So, Where's  
the Silver  
Lining?**



For others, it took more serious reflection and a truly open mind before they could acknowledge one or two positive changes created by the lay-off. The following is a sampling of some of the benefits interviewees identified as a result of their lay-offs:

- More time with spouse/partner
- More time with children
- More time for hobbies/leisure activities
- Time for self
- Time to get involved in community activities/volunteer work
- Reduced level of stress
- Opportunity to explore options (new occupation, retraining, etc.)
- A fresh start
- Increase in salary and benefits at new job
- Time to participate in special interest courses
- Severance provided income to start new business
- Opportunity to make a much needed change
- Re-organized priorities
- New friends/contacts

What are the positive things that have resulted, or may result from your lay-off? List them below.



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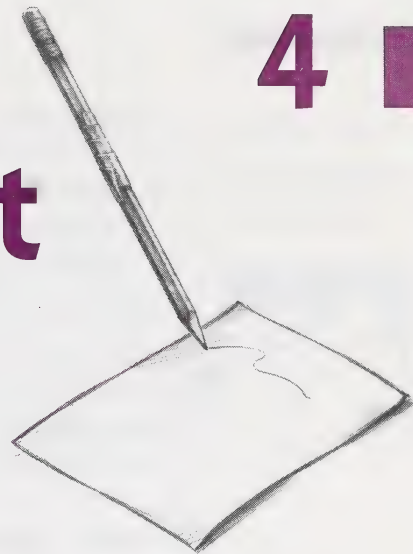
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"What appeared to be a terrible thing, turned out to be the best thing that has ever happened to me. I have my pension and I'm working at something I love."

Stan, 60+, photographer

# Developing a Support Network



You are not alone. And it is essential that you don't attempt to go it alone at this time, even though you may be tempted to do so.

"I wanted to sleep all day, or curl up in front of the T.V. all day. I really cut off contact with everyone for a while. Then my family, especially my Mom got involved. She'd call every day or two to see what I was up to. She really encouraged me."

Candice, 33, cashier

Allowing yourself to call upon the support of others may be difficult for you initially, particularly if you have always seen yourself as "a pillar of strength"; but by allowing others to give you encouragement and support, you may well reduce the length and intensity of your adjustment period considerably.

"The best gift you can give yourself is to ask for help."

Vivian, 44, secretary

## Benefits of Developing Your Support Network

Members of your support network can potentially:

- Provide encouragement
- Offer suggestions
- Give feedback
- Share relevant personal experiences
- Offer resources such as a book, use of a computer, etc.
- Provide assistance/expertise
- Direct you to resources/services you were not aware of
- Listen
- Provide distraction and laughter
- Teach you new skills



Do you depend on just one or two people for support? If so, consider ways to expand your support network.

In column A: list people who support you now and, those who might be willing to help.

In column B: list those agencies and community groups that you can access for support.

In column B: list those agencies and community groups that you can access for support.

B

## Community and Public Supports

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper appears to be a standard notebook page or a sheet of stationery. The edges of the paper are slightly irregular, suggesting it might be from a bound volume. There is no handwriting or other markings on the page.

Each community has a number of supports that are available to the public at little or no cost. Many communities have created directories of these support services to increase the public's awareness of them and to make the services more accessible. Check your public library for the directory of community services in your area. Listed below are just some of the types of agencies you may wish to explore. The services they provide may vary from office to office, and range from delivery of free workshops to provision of one-to-one counselling.

**Note:** If you are located in a small town you may find that the services you require are available in the nearest city.

In Alberta....

## Career Development Centres

Career exploration and planning, apprenticeship information, job search techniques and tools, resource materials, labour market information, training/education information, funding sources, etc.

(Listed under Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development)

Check your telephone directory for special services for students and youth.

Athabasca.....	675-3861	Hinton .....	865-8293
(Athabasca Regional Career Services)		Lac La Biche .....	623-5338
Bonnyville.....	826-4175	Lethbridge .....	381-5419
Calgary .....	297-6520	Lloydminster.....	871-6480
Camrose .....	679-1275	Medicine Hat .....	529-3683
Drayton Valley .....	542-6250	Peace River .....	624-6211
(Cardium Employment Centre)		Pincher Creek .....	627-3922
Edmonton .....	427-3722	Red Deer.....	340-4951
(Career Development Centre)		Rocky Mountain House.....	845-8303
Edmonton.....	428-8161	Slave Lake .....	849-7220
(Youth Employment Services Centre)		St. Paul.....	645-6383
Fort McMurray .....	743-7192	Vermilion.....	853-8152
Grande Prairie .....	538-5348	Wetaskiwin.....	361-1357
High Level.....	926-2661	Whitecourt.....	778-7132

## Public and Community Supports



## Career Information Hotline

Toll-free telephone career information and referral service

(Call Monday to Friday between 8:15 - 4:30)

Edmonton .....422-4266

Hearing Impaired..422-5283

Elsewhere in Alberta.....1-800-661-3753

Hearing Impaired..1-800-232-7215

## Canada Employment Centres

Unemployment Insurance claims, employment counselling, job search and career exploration, job boards, training/education information, funding sources, etc.

(Listed under Human Resource Development Canada, formerly Employment and Immigration Canada)

Blairmore.....562-8118

Jasper .....852-4418

Brooks .....362-3488

Lethbridge .....327-8535

Calgary Metro .....292-4020

Lloydminster.....(306) 825-6291

Camrose .....672-5597

Medicine Hat .....528-6825

Edmonton Metro.....495-4346

Peace River .....624-4485

Edson .....723-3326

Red Deer.....341-7100

Fort McMurray .....743-2258

Rocky Mntn House .....845-6099

Grande Cache.....827-2027

Slave Lake .....849-8201

Grand Centre.....594-4475

St. Paul.....645-4428

Grande Prairie .....532-4411

Stettler.....742-4421

High Level.....926-3777

Wainwright .....842-3389

High Prairie .....523-3331

Wetaskiwin.....352-6081

Hinton .....865-7767



## Alberta Labour/Employment Standards Branch

Employment standards and regulations

Edmonton .....	427-3731	Red Deer .....	340-5153
Calgary .....	297-4339	Medicine Hat .....	529-3524
Lethbridge .....	381-5447	St. Paul .....	645-6360
Grande Prairie .....	538-5253		

## Alberta Federation of Labour

Coordinates trade union programs, provides information regarding rights, obligations, unemployment, wages and other labour issues.

Check your telephone directory for the office nearest you.

## Alberta Human Rights Commission

Administers Individual's Rights Protection Act, to combat discrimination in the areas of employment, public services, membership, tenancy, etc.

Check your telephone directory for the office nearest you.

## Alberta Economic Development and Tourism

Operates business information line and provides business counselling regarding finance, marketing, programs, and makes referrals.

Edmonton .....	422-9494
Other .....	1-800-272-9675

## Alberta Family and Social Services

Family and community support services, employment support services, income support, information, referrals, prevention of family violence, etc.

Check your telephone directory for the office nearest you.

## Municipal Social Services

Family and community support services, information, referrals, etc.

Check your telephone directory for the office nearest you.

## Canadian Mental Health Association

Provides public with information and services to promote mental health.

Check your telephone directory for the office nearest you.

## Specialized Services/Programs

It's useful to make yourself aware of the specialized services, supports and programs available in your community. To locate the specific service or program that you require, check with the Canada Employment Centre or Career Development Centre nearest you or consult your telephone directory. For provincially funded programs, see Government Of Alberta listings for the regional telephone inquiry number. For federally funded programs, call Reference Canada at 1-800-232-9481. These services include, but are not limited to the following:

- Agricultural Employment Services
- Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (A.A.D.A.C.)
- Cultural Awareness Centres
- Distress/Crisis Line
- Educational/Vocational Institutions
- Employabilities formerly known as Employment Services for the Physically Disabled
- Job Finding Clubs
- Lawyer Referral Services
- Native Employment Services Association
- Professional Associations
- Services for Immigrants
- Services for the Retired and Semi-Retired
- Union Offices
- Volunteer Centres
- YMCA/YWCA
- Youth Services

## Supporting Yourself

While it is essential to seek support from others, it is equally, if not more important, to be a support to yourself. Feelings of guilt, failure and inadequacy can lead you to being extra hard on yourself. This is counterproductive. While it's quite natural for you to question "why me?", and search for things you may have done wrong that could have contributed to being laid off, this type of behavior is useful only to a point. If you find yourself doing this, take time to assess your past behaviors, learn from any mistakes you've made, and move forward. It is an important time to avoid the tendency to "beat yourself up".

Be good to yourself. Give yourself permission to have bad days, and allow yourself some recovery time. Be understanding of your moods and attend to your needs. Label your self-defeating behaviors and resolve to replace them with positive, self-affirming behaviors.

Consider ways to make yourself feel better. Different strategies work for different people. Some options may include:

- Write a list of the accomplishments you've made in the past 5 years
- Re-read your positive performance appraisals from work
- Take some time to look back over awards, certificates, letters of recognition, etc. you've received in the past
- Make a list of things you like about yourself
- Make a list of nice things other people say about you
- Flip through photographs of good times
- Visualize wonderful things happening for you
- Engage in an activity you enjoy

On the following page make a list of activities you can do to make yourself feel better during this period.



## Activity: Support Yourself

List a minimum of 10 activities that you enjoy doing on your own.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

List a minimum of 10 activities that you really enjoy doing with others. Be specific about who you like to do each activity with.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

\*Schedule at least one activity from each list above, to do once a month. (once a week would even be better, - you deserve it!)



# Where to from Here? (Moving on)

Once your most immediate concerns and needs have been attended to, you've allowed yourself some time to deal with the impact of the lay-off and you've established a support system, you are in a position to begin exploring the options available to you.

For many, one of the first thoughts upon learning of a lay-off is, "I need to find another job right away...". But this is only one of many options. Have you ever heard it said that crisis equals opportunity? Although that may seem hard to believe at this point in your career, it has proven to be true for many who have been in similar circumstances.

"It really was the best thing that ever happened to me."

Brian, 43, personnel manager

The potential is there for you too. Before you start exploring your options, allow yourself to dream a little. Complete the activity on the next page..

"All great things started with a dream"

unknown



\_\_\_\_\_

Now, with a mind clear of all obstacles, fantasize about what you would like to do, now that you are no longer working at your former job. Let your imagination run wild. For now, avoid practical considerations such as “I need to earn at least \$45,000 a year to cover the mortgage and feed the family.” There’s plenty of time for reality later. For now, place no restrictions on your options, and just dream.

## Your Dream

[illegible]





Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal lines.



## Consider Yourself

Before you throw yourself into a search for a new job, take some time to thoroughly explore what it is that you want. If nothing else positive has occurred for you as a result of your lay-off, make certain to take full advantage of the opportunity it has provided you with to re-examine your goals, priorities, needs and desires. It shouldn't take long to become reacquainted with yourself, and the rewards could be far reaching.

To get started, look back at the last activity. What did it tell you about yourself in terms of your values, interests, and wishes? It may be useful to have a friend assist you in identifying some of the things that may not be as apparent to you. Or, you may wish to explore these aspects of yourself with the support of a Career Counsellor at your local Career Development Centre. Either way, be true to yourself. Write down the things that are important to you, and don't lose sight of those things as you move on.

In addition to clarifying your interests, goals, values, priorities, needs and desires, take some time to assess the skills you have developed over the years. Consider which of these skills you really enjoy using, and which of these skills would be an asset when pursuing future goals. You may discover skills that you would like to develop further, or areas of expertise that you would like to share with others.

As you work through your self-exploration, keep in mind your dream. Is it something you can achieve? Are there parts of it that you can turn into reality? Commit yourself to adopting at least a piece of your dream into your life. It may not be easy, but consider the rewards.

**NOTE:** See the resource section for texts and free publications that will help you in your self-exploration.

## Options

In this section some of the options available to you are outlined. For more detailed information about each option, refer to the RESOURCE section of this workbook. In considering all your options, you may begin to understand how you can transform your lay-off into an opportunity.

### New Job/Same Field

This is often the first and only option a laid off employee gives consideration to. It may be a good choice for you if:

- a) There are jobs available in that field in the location you desire.
- b) The future outlook for those positions is favorable and lay-offs aren't anticipated in the near future.

- c) You have a good chance of being hired for the positions you seek as you are a qualified candidate.
- d) You really enjoy the work.
- e) It will aid you in achieving your goals.

## Relocating

Moving to another town, city, province or country to pursue employment, education, or new business opportunities, may be an appealing option for some. This option warrants a considerable amount of research. If indicators suggest that there are plenty of opportunities for new business starts, investigate demographics, business developments, etc., to determine if there is a need for the particular type of business you plan to engage in. Examine the following:

- a) The costs involved in the move.
- b) Opportunities available in the new location considering supply vs. demand.
- c) Vacancy rates and costs of housing or accommodation.
- d) Cost of living.
- e) Unemployment rate.
- f) Impact on family, friends etc.

## Occupational Change

A viable consideration for many following a lay-off is changing the type of work one does. For example: changing from nursing to teaching. The new field of work may be totally different, or it might include components from the original occupation that the individual enjoyed such as teaching nursing skills to families involved in home care programs.

This option may be particularly appealing to you if you were laid off from a position where the employment opportunities in that field are few and far between. Some questions to ask yourself regarding an occupational change:

- a) Am I sure I wish to change occupations? What are my reasons?
- b) Have I engaged in Career Exploration and Planning?
- c) Have I thoroughly researched my options?
- d) Have I chosen a field that is compatible with my values, skills, and interests?
- e) Are the future prospects in that occupation favorable?
- f) Am I willing to update my training or education in order to find employment in that field?



## Further Education/Retraining/Upgrading

A lay-off may present the perfect opportunity for returning to learning. There are many alternatives available to individuals in pursuit of further knowledge and skills, many of which are listed below:

- a) Full-time studies
- b) Part-time studies
- c) Distance Learning (correspondence)
- d) Apprenticeship (combination of on-the-job training and formal technical training)

If you are considering one or a combination of these options, examine the following:

- i) Will the training I engage in be recognized by prospective employers, and aid in furthering my career?
- ii) Do I have the money required to complete my training? Or am I eligible for special funding, loans, etc.?
- iii) Have I got the pre-requisites necessary to get into the program?
- iv) Have I researched all the educational/training options and made the best choice for me?

## Work Options

With all the changes in the labour market, a variety of work options have emerged. Whether you choose to stay in your existing occupation or make a change, consider these alternatives:

- a) Job Sharing - two people share one full-time position, its duties, salary and benefits.
- b) Part-time Work - working less than 30 hours a week in a permanent or temporary position.
- c) Temporary Work - provide cover off for personnel on leave with a variety of companies.
- d) On-call Work - working when needed, often on short notice.
- e) Seasonal Work - working long, steady hours during industries' peak seasons only.
- f) Telecommuting - working at home, connected to the office by phone, fax and/or computer equipment.

## Self-Employment

The trend toward entrepreneurship is growing rapidly. If you are an enterprising individual who enjoys a challenge, you may wish to explore one of the many alternatives in this area:

- a) Provide consulting and freelancing services.
- b) Purchase a franchise.
- c) Develop a partnership.
- d) Start a new business.
- e) Operate a home-based business.
- f) Conduct a mail order business.
- g) Engage in multi-level marketing.
- h) Create and market a new product or service.

## Retirement or Semi-Retirement

Naturally, this option is not available to everyone at this stage of the game. But for those of you who are considering it, take some time to think through the following:

- a) Do I really want to retire? Or am I choosing to because I feel I have no alternatives?
- b) Am I financially in a position to do so?
- c) Have I done any retirement planning?
- d) Will retirement or semi-retirement aid me in achieving my goals?

## Alternatives to Paid Work


There may still be a few options left that are worth considering. However, they may require some lifestyle changes because these are options that do not result in an income. Nevertheless, the potential for rewards is great. These include:

- a) Bartering/Exchanging services and goods instead of cash.
- b) Homemaking - in a two-income family, it may be possible for one parent to remain at home.
- c) Volunteering - offering your time and skills to an organization can be very rewarding, and has the fringe benefit of increasing your network and potentially leading to paid employment.

Now, take a moment to complete the activity on the next page. If you are unsure about which options suit you best, seriously consider engaging in career planning. You can do this on a one-to-one basis with a counsellor, participate in a workshop, or do it on your own using Career Exploration materials outlined in the resource section of this manual.

## Activity: Options Inventory

Place a check mark, ✓ beside the options you have considered, then place your choices in order of priority, for example 1 = your most appealing option, 2 = your next most appealing, and so on.



✓	Priority	Options
_____	_____	Engage in career exploration/planning
_____	_____	Make an occupational change
_____	_____	Attend skill training, upgrading, or post-secondary courses
_____	_____	Engage in job search in current field
_____	_____	Seek part-time work
_____	_____	Seek full-time work
_____	_____	Participate in a job share position
_____	_____	Relocate to an area where your skills are in demand
_____	_____	Retire
_____	_____	Semi-retire
_____	_____	Start a business of your own
_____	_____	Purchase a franchise
_____	_____	Establish a partnership
_____	_____	Barter your services and products
_____	_____	Engage in volunteer work
_____	_____	Other

Once you have done an inventory of your options and listed in order of priority the ones that appeal to you, it is time to gather more information about each option.

**NOTE:** If you choose an option that involves finding a job, you may need to update your job search skills and resume. You may find it useful to examine the job loss cycle identified by Dr. N. Amundson and Dr. W. Borgen in their publication, *At The Controls: Charting Your Course Through Unemployment*. Dr. Amundson and Dr. Borgen suggest that job loss and job search may lead to an "emotional roller coaster" for unemployed individuals.

## Examining your Options



Making a wise choice about which option(s) to pursue is dependent upon thoroughly researching each one. There are two main approaches to gathering the information that will be required for you to make an informed decision: 1) print research and 2) people research.

## Print Research

Locate all the current written information available on the option, and spend some time reading about it. Some advantages of print materials include: they're easy to access, factual, and provide a quick means to locating information. Some print resources you may wish to consider are listed in the resource section of this workbook. You may also wish to consider other sources such as public libraries, career centres, newspapers, magazines, etc.. The information you gather through print will provide a framework for the second stage of your research.

## People Research

Because print materials become outdated quickly and provide primarily the plain facts regarding your options, it is beneficial to supplement the knowledge you obtained through print with information obtained through people who are knowledgeable regarding your options. The information people can provide you with is likely more up-to-date, and may contain more details than are available through print resources. To gather information from people, consider doing an information gathering interview with them, job shadowing, or volunteering.

Once you have gathered all the facts about each of your options, you are in a good position to choose the alternative(s) most desirable to you.

Your goal is to make the best possible decision, given the realities of your situation.

Some people, when faced with a major decision, like to outline the pros and cons of each option, or create a checklist of their needs, desires, etc.. Then they evaluate each option to discover which one best matches their checklist. Which ever approach you decide to take, make certain you are comfortable with your decision. Avoid making choices based on your desire to please others.

In order to achieve success, you need to be clear on what success means to you; that is, what it is that you want. It's not enough to say, "I just want to be happy", or "I just want a job that fulfills my basic needs."

Decision  
Making

Goal Setting

Your goals must be specific, measurable, realistic and time-targeted. Otherwise, they may be forever elusive. Having a poorly defined goal is like leaving for a trip without a specific destination.

Try writing down one of your goals, using the guidelines stated above. If you are still not clear on which option(s) you will pursue, write a goal pertaining to finding out more about your options. For example: "I will gather all the information available regarding entrepreneurship, by conducting print and people research no later than date/month/year."

Writing your goals down can be a powerful motivator to achieving them. Use the space below to write down some of your goals now.

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## Action Planning

Your wishes will always be wishes, unless you take action.

Where do you begin? Start with your goal and break it down into smaller steps, or short-term goals.

### Activity: Action Plan

Example:

Goal: I will gather all the information available regarding entrepreneurship, by conducting print and people research no later than date/month/year.

### Tasks (Near Future)

## Dates

## Tasks (Later)

## Dates

Complete your action plan below.

## Tasks (This week)

## Dates







**Tasks (Next week)**

**Dates**


**Tasks (Later)**

**Dates**


\*Keep track of the progress you make with your action plan, and build in rewards for yourself as you accomplish the tasks you've listed.

When planning ahead it's always a good idea to have a positive outlook, and expect the best results. That way, you're more likely to achieve the desired results. Having said that, it's also important to identify potential obstacles in order to prepare some back-up plans.

Complete the barrier identification activity on the following page so that you are ready for the challenges you may face ahead.

### Pitfalls

Below is a listing of some of the pitfalls encountered by interviewees:

"I've been laid off 3 times now. I've asked myself, 'what am I doing wrong?' But you see, the industry I work in has had some hard blows due to the economy. Anyway, now I'm looking at options. I'm re-evaluating my career so that I'm not so susceptible to lay-offs. It's difficult to always be up and positive, but you have to try."

Gary, 34, civil technologist

"I experienced a tremendous loss of self-esteem, and I had a sense that I had lost my integrity."

Winnie, 55, office support staff

"At this time in my life, what's the chances of finding a job similar to the one I had, with similar pay? Realistically, very little. In my field of expertise the opportunities are few. So, it takes a while to adjust."

Bob, 50, sr. manager

"The magnitude of the current situation wasn't apparent at first. It is now. I've been out of work for 8 months now."

Derek, 45, transport planning engineer

"I took the lay-off personally, I blamed myself. I lost whatever confidence I had left, I was my own worst enemy."

Stephanie, 37, pharmacist

Lack of Money  
(to start a new business)

1. Investigate Alberta Opportunity Company
2. Contact Federal Business Development Bank
3. Locate private investors





# You're in Good Company

6



There are thousands of highly skilled individuals who like you have been laid-off as a result of mergers, company closures and down-sizing. Many of them have gone on to create success in their lives. The stories of five people have been included here to offer you insights and a sense of hope.

## Jeanette, 53, New Job/Same Occupation

At 53 years of age, Jeanette was in a job she believed would take her to retirement. For nearly eighteen years she had been a dedicated and loyal employee of Company X. Three years prior, Jeanette's efforts had been recognized when she was promoted to the position of division manager. It was a position she had aspired to for years and by all reports Jeanette was doing a commendable job. So when the news came that Jeanette was to be laid-off, it came as a huge blow.

"I was so upset, I couldn't think straight and I kept thinking, 'why me?'. It just seemed so unfair. I had given so much of myself to that company. What did they think I would do now?! I really felt they put me 'out to pasture' so to speak. How did they expect a 53 year old woman to get a job, especially in this market?"

Jeanette struggled with feelings of despair, worry and low self esteem for close to a month. A good friend encouraged her to volunteer some of her time with a local non-profit organization.

"I was wallowing in self-pity and had nothing else to do, so I decided to give it a try. As it turned out, they really needed someone there with a management background. Within five weeks they had hired me for the position of executive director. It was like a dream come true. Although I wasn't dissatisfied in my last job, I am so much happier now. I find it hard to be bitter with my former employer because if they hadn't laid me off I'd be making five thousand dollars a year less and I wouldn't have met all the wonderful people I'm working with now."

## Personal Stories



## Kate, 34, Occupational Change

Both Kate and her husband were “victims of massive lay-offs” when a major retailer closed several stores and replaced full time staff with part time employees.

“ We were forced to make major lifestyle changes. No longer could we afford our house, our annual vacation or the designer jeans for the kids. My husband had special training as a meat cutter but he wasn’t likely to find a job very quickly, and I had no formal education. So, where was I going to find a job that would pay me anything close to what I was earning after twelve years as a cashier with Company Y? ”

Kate spent three months looking for a job she thought she would be suited for.

“ At first I was picky, but then I got discouraged because I wasn’t even getting interviews. So, I started applying for everything. I guess I realized I was heading in the wrong direction when the only job I was offered turned out to be a used car sales position. I knew I wanted something different, but I didn’t know what.”

A friend told Kate about a career planning workshop at the Career Development Centre. Kate and her husband attended. After some self exploration, Kate decided on an occupational change. She decided to get on-the-job training to become a cosmetician.

“ This way I can still do what I love and work with people but I’m also learning new skills. I have a new focus and if all goes well I’m considering using my severance money to purchase a small cosmetic franchise. ”

## Rick, 43, Return To School

Rick had been working as an auto mechanic for seventeen years when his lay-off notice came.

“ I put off telling my wife for two days. All weekend long I was trying to figure out how to get around it. I knew she’d go crazy. Anyway, on Monday I had to tell her because I had no job to go to. Things were tough for a while. She was mad at (my former employer) and she took it out on me and the kids. She hadn’t worked for years and we have a big mortgage and two children. I guess we were all worried. ”

After six weeks of scouring the classified ads Rick was discouraged. He had called all his personal and business contacts to no avail. Nevertheless, two shops had requested his resume.

" A resume? I had been working in the same place for nearly eighteen years. I didn't have a resume. I needed help because I didn't have a clue how to do one. A buddy who was out of work last year told me where he got his done. So I went there ( Career Development Centre) and they showed me how to do my own. But when I was talking to the guy there he was asking questions that got me thinking. Anyway, the long and short of it is, I decided to go back to school. I was kind of tired of doing the same thing for so long and I had always wanted to get into computers. "

After doing some career exploration Rick enrolled in a computer systems technology program at a post secondary institute. His wife got a part time job.

" Friends told us about a job they thought she'd be good for. She applied and got it. She really likes being back at work now and I've started to do work on vehicles for friends. It helps pay the bills. "

## **Barry, 56, Semi-Retirement**

At age fifty-six, Barry was counting on at least four more years of employment before retirement. A senior manager in a highly technical field, Barry made every effort to keep on top of the technological advances in his industry.

" I suppose I knew I'd be one of the first to go. Even though I'd taken courses throughout my career to remain current, I knew the young lads were better positioned when the lay-off started. But I didn't feel fifty-six and I wasn't ready to retire. I suppose the thinking is ' he's an old guy, close to retirement anyway and he doesn't need the job as much as the next guy', but you know, I had even more financial commitments than when I was forty. I wasn't prepared to be without an income. "

" I activated my network convinced I'd have no trouble replacing my job. But I realized in fairly short order that it is indeed a tough market. I was forced to consider other options. My wife and I decided to take a retirement planning workshop (something we should have done ten years ago), and after some discussion I decided to opt for semi-retirement. I'm very pleased with our lifestyle now. I spend two days a week consulting and three days a week enjoying my leisure. My golf game has never been better. "

## Brian, 50, Entrepreneurship

Brian had plans to celebrate his fiftieth birthday when he learned of his lay-off. The government department where he had worked for most of his career was to be privatized.

" Some people were offered positions with other departments and the rest of us were given severance packages. I believe the package was fair but I was concerned nonetheless. I knew what the labour market was like and I questioned whether I would be able to find a job at my age. Rather than celebrate with friends that night, my wife and I went over our finances, drafted a budget and generally discussed our future. Over the weekend we made plans to meet with our lawyer and accountant. We discussed our alternatives and developed a plan of attack. Then, at 8 A.M. Monday morning I got a call from a colleague who had left the department six months previously. He had heard of the department's plans to privatize and he had a proposal for me. "

Brian and his former colleague spent the next four weeks researching and developing a business plan. Within two months the pair had positioned themselves to open their own business using the combined skills they had developed during their years with the government.

" I've never looked back. It has been a very rewarding experience. "



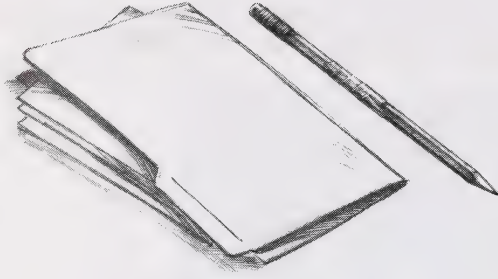
While each of these individuals has achieved success for him/herself, they acknowledge that their journeys were not without problems and obstacles. Below are suggestions from people who have encountered difficulties on their way to success.

- 1) Look at all your options and evaluate each carefully.
- 2) Get proper financial advice.
- 3) Be adaptable and willing to work hard.
- 4) Give yourself time to recuperate, but put a deadline on it, then dig right in there and work on where to go from here.
- 5) Think of the loss as an opportunity, a positive move.
- 6) If you can't get the support you need from one place, look elsewhere until you find it.
- 7) Do things for yourself.
- 8) Get legal advice from someone who specializes in separation agreements.
- 9) Get out there and network. Let people know who you are and what you need.
- 10) As soon as you feel comfortable, get into some career counselling. It will force you to think about what you want to do.
- 11) Talk to others who have been in the same boat. Learn from their experiences.
- 12) Get into a support group with people you can vent your feelings with.
- 13) Do a budget and prepare yourself financially.
- 14) If you want a job, get help with your resume and find out about the hidden job market.

If you know someone who has been laid off, meet with him/her to discuss your experiences. Don't underestimate the value of sharing ideas, thoughts and plans. You may learn a great deal from each other.

## Tips to Surviving the Pitfalls

# Resources



## Job Loss/ Unemployment



Outlined in this section are some of the print and audio-visual resources that may be of use to you as you explore your options and prepare to move on. Many of them are available in the public library or at your Career Development Centre.

### Publications

AT THE CONTROLS: CHARTING YOUR COURSE THROUGH UNEMPLOYMENT  
Amundson, Dr. N. and Borgen, Dr. W., Employment and Immigration Canada, 1992

### At the Public Library

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'VE BEEN FIRED: SOUND ADVICE FOR WOMEN WHO'VE BEEN TERMINATED, PINK-SLIPPED, DOWNSIZED, OR OTHERWISE UNEMPLOYED  
Koltnow, E. and Dumas, L., Ballantine Books, New York, N.Y., 1990

THE JOY OF NOT WORKING  
Zelinski, Ernie, Visions International Publishing, Edmonton, Alberta, 1992

LANDING ON YOUR FEET: THE CANADIAN GUIDE TO SURVIVING, COPING AND PROSPERING FROM JOB LOSS  
Brown, Mara, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Whitby, Ont., 1992

YOUR SERVICES ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED - THE COMPLETE JOB LOSS RECOVERY BOOK  
Kirkwood, Christopher, Penguin Books Canada Ltd., Toronto, Ont., 1993

## Career Exploration/ Planning

### Publications

CHANGING COURSE MIDSTREAM  
Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1992

SELF-DIRECTED CAREER PLANNING GUIDE  
Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1994

WORKING TOGETHER KIT FOR DUAL CAREER FAMILIES  
Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1989

## At the Public Library

WHAT COLOUR IS YOUR PARACHUTE

Bolles, Richard, Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, California, 1994

## Audio-Visual

OPENING DOORS: KEYS TO CAREER PLANNING

Video Series 1982

## Publications

JOB SEARCH: THE PRODUCT IS YOU

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1992

JOB SEEKERS' HANDBOOK

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1992

SKILLS ARE YOUR PASSPORT

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1988

## Audio-Visuals

JOB SEARCH: THE PRODUCT IS YOU

Video 1992

THE JOB HUNT

Video 1989

## Publications

Check the educational calendars of each of the institutions for pre-requisites, course details, etc.

THE ADULT BACK-TO-SCHOOL BOOK

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1994

IT'S ABOUT TIME

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1993

LEARNING AT HOME: DISTANCE EDUCATION IN ALBERTA, MANITOBA AND SASKATCHEWAN

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1993-94

## Audio-Visuals

GOING BACK: ADULTS RETURNING TO EDUCATION

Video 1983

Job Search/  
Resumes/  
Interview  
Skills

Returning to  
School

## Starting a Business

### Publications

ENTREPRENEUR: A BIG WORD FOR A SMALL BUSINESS...THINKING ABOUT IT?  
Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1993

### At the Public Library

(For a thorough listing, refer to the free publication, ENTREPRENEUR: A BIG WORD FOR SMALL BUSINESS)

CHANGING THE RULES: THE WOMAN'S GUIDE TO STARTING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

Mirabella, Marina, Stoddard Publishing Co. Ltd., Toronto, Ontario, 1988

STARTING A BUSINESS: A COMPLETE GUIDE TO STARTING AND MANAGING YOUR OWN COMPANY

Brockhouse, Gordon, Key Porter Books Ltd., Toronto, Ontario, 1989

### Audio-Visuals

THE ENTREPRENEUR

Video 1985

## Miscellaneous

### Publications

POSITIVE WORKS

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1992

WORK OF ALL SORTS

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1993

CHANGING COURSE MIDSTREAM

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1992

REGULATIONS and EXCERPTS FROM THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS CODE  
Employment Standards Branch, Alberta Labour, 1990

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DOWNSHIFTING (REINVENTING SUCCESS ON A SLOWER TRACK)

Saltzman, Amy, Harper Collins Publishers, New York, N.Y., 1991

TEAMWORKS (BUILDING SUPPORT GROUPS THAT GUARANTEE SUCCESS)

Sher, B. and Gottlieb, A., Warner Books, Inc., New York, N.Y., 1989

QUESTERS...DARE TO CHANGE YOUR JOB AND YOUR LIFE

Kanchier, Carole, Key Porter Books, Ltd., Toronto, Ontario, 1988











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